

DATE: November 20, 2000

Working Memo 829

TO: All OWP Staff

THROUGH: Robert W. Hicks, Acting Director
Office of Water Programs

FROM: Robert B. Taylor, P.E., Director
Office of Water Programs

SUBJECT: Water - Procedure - Emergency Response -
Delete Memo 428

Reference WM 797, 753

History: From time to time, the Office of Water Programs (OWP) responds to emergencies as part of our commitment to the protection of the public health of the citizens of the Commonwealth. These emergencies may be natural or man-made, i.e. floods, droughts, and chemical/sewage spills. Regarding natural disasters, particularly the floods, the OWP is often one of the first relief and assistance agencies to the affected area. **For routine sewage spills/overflows, etc. the OWP field offices have been designated as the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) contact due to the possible drinking water impact hopefully via the Pollution Response Emergency Procedure (PreP) program.**

Procedure: For all types of emergencies, we must be prepared to take necessary action at any time.

The PreP was established to facilitate agency notification of emergencies. A PReP duty team has been established in the Central Office. Central Office personnel volunteer to serve as PReP duty officers, having weekly assignments on a rotation basis. When a potential pollution problem occurs, or an emergency situation exists, the VDH's PReP duty officer will be notified by the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) PReP team and/or the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM). The Central Office PReP duty officer will, in turn, notify the appropriate field office and shellfish personnel by means of a priority contact list. A current list of telephone numbers of field office and shellfish personnel is maintained in a Pollution Alert Manual provided to the on-duty PReP officer. Normal procedure is to contact the Classification Chief for effected shellfish harvesting areas and the appropriate Field Director. If the Field Director or the Classification Chief cannot be reached, the duty officer will proceed down the list of names until a contact is made. The Division of Wastewater Engineering (DWE) Director will be contacted in case of a biosolids event.

For emergencies reported directly to the field office and not through the PreP system, the Field Director should notify the Division of Water Supply Engineering (DWSE) Director or Technical Services Administrator by telephone or e-mail if deemed appropriate. (Routine sewage spills/overflows would not normally require this action.) Decisions on other agencies that need to be contacted, as well as the PreP system, will be made at that time. The DWE Area Engineer should be contacted in case of a biosolids event.

All emergency activities require documentation with the exception of routine sewage spills/overflows which are at the discretion of the Field Director. Some emergency responses require field visits; others can be satisfactorily handled from the office. The attached memo form has been developed to assist in recording the information and making sure all pertinent information is received. The memo form, "Reports of Emergencies," includes for general information the DEQ PReP team number, which is manned continuously. If an e-mail documentation is used in lieu of the memo form, please include the basic information found on the memo form. As in all cases, the Local Health Department (LHD) must be kept informed by the usual means especially due to possible impacts on recreational waters.

Final Disposition of Forms: When an emergency situation has been resolved to the extent of the authority of the OWP, one copy of the completed memo form or an e-mail response shall be sent to the DWSE Technical Services Administrator. The Central Office will then use this information to update any other affected party, such as the DEQ, OEHS, etc. A second copy of the documentation should be filed appropriately at the field office.

Conclusion: It is important that we provide prompt and reliable information during real emergency situations. The procedure outlined above is our attempt to do so. Certainly, not all emergency situations can be foreseen; therefore, if a condition arises which can not be molded to apply to either of the formats, contact the DWSE Technical Services Administrator to determine what additional information may be necessary.

GWP/teh
Attachment

Are there any critical water areas (raw water intakes, shellfish areas, etc.) downstream from the point where the incident occurred? If so, identify.

Are there any public or private wells/springs within a 1,000 ft. radius that maybe impacted? If so, identify public sources.

If so, have these areas been notified of the incident? _____

What measures have been taken to counterbalance the results of the incident?

Follow-up:

Has the situation been corrected? _____

Date of Correction _____

Comments: _____
